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ABSTRACT

A survey of 278 students who completed at least one of six telecourses offered by Lane Community College (LCC) from Fall 1978 through Winter 1981 was conducted to determine: (1) background information on how students learned about the course, their reasons for enrolling and for selecting a telecourse rather than an on-campus course, and their LCC enrollment status; (2) course delivery information related to students' contact with the instructor; the appropriateness of the level, pace, and format of the programs; and the students' tendency to view the modules more than once; (3) course material information about the use and value of study materials, "after watching" activities, and videotexts; (4) general course information about the value of the course, temptation to drop the course, and particular features liked and disliked by the students; (5) general telecourse satisfaction and suggestions. Students were given the option of answering questions about their age, sex, and employment status. Selected findings, based on 222 responses, reveal that most of the students (56.8%) learned about the courses through LCC mailings, and that 44.1% of the respondents took the course to earn credit, 33.3% had a general interest in the subject, and 14% viewed the courses for professional improvement. The survey report briefly describes the telecourses and summarizes findings. The instrument is appended. (JP)

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TELECOURSE SURVEY RESULTS

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TELECOURSE SURVEY RESULTS

Introduction

Since spring term 1979, Lane Community College has been offering telecourses on a regular basis. The Consumer Education course was the first course using television as the primary instructional delivery mode to be offered to community residents. As this was Lane's first venture into telecourses, a study was conducted to gather information and opinions relative to the use of television as an educational delivery system (Alvergue et al, 1980). The results of this pilot venture were positive, and Lane continued to offer courses by television each subsequent term.

The telecourses were promoted by radio public service announcements, brochures, ads in local newspapers, articles in the student newspaper, and word-of-mouth. The "TV Week" section of the Eugene Register-Guard contained brief descriptions of each course module. The courses could be viewed on television or on the LCC campus.

Each course contained 18-30 modules of 30 minutes in length. A workbook containing a vocabulary section and pre- and postwatching activities was available for each telecourse. An orientation session was scheduled for each course in which instructors provided suggestions on how to take a television course. Students were expected to come to LCC 3-4 times during the term for test-taking. The instructors were available for office visits or student telephone conferences throughout the term.

From fall 1979 to winter 1981, LCC has offered 5 telecourses. They are:

* Introduction to Business
* The Drama of Child Development
* Consumer Education
* Your Health, Your Choice
* Mathematics for Modern Living

In addition, Cosmos, a television series presented on OEPBS, was aired fall term 1980 as part of the telecourse offerings. This course was composed of 13 one-hour video modules.

During this period, a total of 278 students completed courses in which the telecourse survey was distributed. This group represented 77.9% of the total number of students completing telecourses between spring 1979 and winter 1981. Each student in the identified courses was asked to complete a Telecourse Survey (attachment 1) which sought information on the student's reaction to the course content, its delivery, the instructional materials, the pacing of the course, and the instructor's role. Information was also gathered on how the student learned about the course, why the student decided to enroll in a telecourse, and general suggestions or concerns that the student had about telecourse offerings. Of those completing telecourses during this period, 222 (79.9%) responded to the Telecourse Survey. Table 1 (page 2) presents information on the response rate for the courses offered from fall 1979 to winter 1981.

TABLE 1

LCC TELECOURSE OFFERINGS
Student Survey Response Rates
Fall 1979-Winter 1981

	Business			Development			Education			Cosmos			Health			Mathematics			Total		
Term	Final Comp.*	Response Rate N	%	Final Comp.	Response Rate N	%	Final Comp.	Response Rate N	%	Final Comp.	Response Rate N	%	Final Comp.	Response Rate N	%	Final Comp.	Response Rate N	%	Final Comp.	Response Rate N	%
Fall 1979				10	4	40.0													10	4	40.0
Winter 1980							9	7	77.8										9	7	77.8
Spring 1980	5	5	100.0	16	11	68.7	15	13	86.7				10	10	100.0				46	39	84.8
Fall 1980	12	10	83.3	16	14	87.5	22	5	22.7	36	34	94.4	5	5	100.0	6	5	83.3	97	73	75.3
Winter 1981	27	22	81.5	24	23	95.8	21	14	66.7				38	34	89.5	6	6	100.0	116	99	85.3
TOTAL	44	37	84.1	66	52	78.8	67	39	58.2	36	34	94.4	53	49	92.4	12	11	91.7	278	222	79.9

* Final number of students completing the course.

The remainder of this paper presents the composite results of student responses to selected core questions on the Telecourse Survey. All of the survey items were not included in this complete study due to the differences in course materials and course content between the six telecourses. Complete survey results for each of the individual telecourses are available in the Office of Program Evaluation or from the Telecourse Coordinator.

Background Information

The students were asked to volunteer information on their sex, age, and employment status. Of the respondents, 77.5% agreed to provide all (or part) of these data. Approximately 45% of these respondents were women and approximately 48% were 30 years old or less. Almost one-half (47%) of these students were full-time students at the time they completed the telecourse.

Of the 278 students completing the telecourses, 222 (79.9%) responded to the Telecourse Survey. Of these people, 197 (88.7%) had taken other classes at LCC. The majority (90.9%) of these students were enrolled in another LCC course during the term in which they took the telecourse.

The students learned about the telecourses in a variety of ways. However, the majority of respondents (56.8%) indicated that they first learned of the course through the college's mailing efforts (e.g., college catalogue, brochures). Table 2 presents data on the sources of information used by the students.

TABLE 2

SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT LCC TELECOURSES

Source	Students Using N	%
Mail	126	56.8
Friend/relative	36	16.2
Television	11	4.9
Newspaper	9	4.1
Other (counselor, instructor, other LCC personnel)	39	17.6

Various reasons were given by the students for enrolling in the telecourses. These reasons are presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3

REASONS FOR ENROLLING IN THE LCC TELECOURSE

Reason	Student Response N	%
To earn credit toward a degree	98	44.1
General interest in subject	74	33.3
Professional improvement	31	14.0
Other (teacher certification, required for program, other classes not available)	19	8.6

The telecourses were offered at times when other courses would have been available to the students "on-campus." Therefore, we were interested in finding out why students chose to enroll in a telecourse rather than a more traditional "on-campus" course. Table 4 shows the reasons given by students for selecting the telecourse offering.

TABLE 4

REASONS FOR SELECTING TELECOURSE
RATHER THAN AN "ON-CAMPUS" COURSE

Reason	Student Response N	%
Offered at more convenient time	130	58.6
Transportation problems	117	52.7
Liked idea of taking course at home	84	37.8
Child care problems	40	18.0
No similar class available on campus	21	9.5
Other (on-campus courses full, more flexibility of time, liked individual approach, distance from campus)	28	12.6

The timing of the telecourses appears to be a major factor in selecting these courses over the "on-campus" offerings. This includes both the scheduling of viewing time on the television, as well as the ability to be flexible in viewing the modules on campus and in studying for the course.

Course Delivery Information

Almost all (93.2%) of the respondents said that they had direct contact with the telecourse instructor during the course. The types of instructor contact varied, but most of the students had "multiple" contacts with the instructor (e.g., both telephone contact and office visits). The types of instructor contact are shown in Table 5.

TABLE 5

TYPES OF INSTRUCTOR CONTACT

Contact Type	Student Response N	%
Office visits	120	58.0
Telephone	109	52.6
Class/seminar meetings	90	43.5
Other (exams, mail)	29	14.0

The modules were available for student viewing at the LCC Library. For some courses, they were also available at the Eugene Public Library and the LCC Math Resource Center. Also, the modules were often aired more than one time on the local television channels. This allowed students to view specific modules more than one time if needed. Of the respondents, 51.3% viewed a module more than one time. Often this was done to review specific information or to "pick up" parts that they had missed during the first viewing. The students liked being able to repeat a lesson in this fashion.

General Course Information

Of the respondents, 84.2% reported that the telecourse contained information which was of "higher-than-average" value to them. Only 14.4% of the students said that they had ever considered dropping the course. These students most frequently cited personal reasons (e.g., illness, job or home responsibilities) or difficulty with maintaining a viewing schedule as their major reason for thinking about dropping the course.

The students tended to watch the television modules both at home and at LCC. Table 6 shows information on where the students generally viewed the course.

TABLE 6

LOCATION FOR WATCHING THE LCC TELECOURSE

Location	Student Response N	%
At LCC	128	57.7
At home	111	50.0
On the LCC Bus	4	1.8
Other (Eugene Public Library; work)	21	9.5

As reported earlier, approximately 89% of the students had taken other classes at LCC. Of the respondents, 53.2% stated that the telecourse, when compared to "on-campus" courses, was better. The reasons most frequently given for this feeling dealt with the flexibility of the scheduling of their viewing and studying, as well as the individualized nature of the course.

Conclusions

The majority of the students (86%) said that they would recommend a telecourse to a friend. This response appears to reflect the positive reactions that the student had toward the telecourses.

The majority of the students liked the flexibility provided by the telecourse format. Of particular appeal was the ability to progress at their own pace and to repeatedly view individual modules if needed. The students also felt that the telecourses were offered at convenient times and that ability to learn "via television" helped ease some of their transportation, home and child care problems.

Most of the students enrolled in the telecourse to earn credits toward a degree or because of general interest in the subject. Since approximately 89% of the students had taken another LCC class, the telecourses have not yet reached a significant number of "new" students. However, this does provide the telecourse students with a basis for comparison. The majority of the students felt that the telecourse contained information of value to them and that the telecourse was better than "on-campus" courses because of the flexibility it provided the student.

Julie Aspinwall-Lamberts
June 1981

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AW:943F

Attachment

Copy of the Telecourse Survey

TELECOURSE SURVEY

Course: _____ Term: _____

Instructor: _____

Directions:

We are asking your reaction to the TV course you took. Your answers will be added to those of other students so that you will not be individually identified.

A. For each item, check [✓] or circle the answer which bests states your opinion.
B. Answer all the questions as completely as possible.
C. Return this survey to the instructor in the attached envelope.

Thanks for your help!

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Have you taken a course by TV before?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

2. How did you first hear about this course? (Check only one response)

[ ] Mail (college catalogue or other district information)
[ ] TV
[ ] Radio
[ ] Newspaper
[ ] Friend/relative
[ ] Other (please state: _____)

3. Why did you enroll in this course? (Check only one response)

[ ] General interest in the subject
[ ] Professional or occupational improvement or advancement
[ ] To earn credit toward a college degree
[ ] Other (please state: _____)

4. Why did you enroll in a TV course rather than an "on-campus" course? (Check all appropriate answers)

[ ] No similar class available on campus
[ ] Transportation problems
[ ] Offered at a more convenient time
[ ] Child care problems
[ ] Liked idea of taking course at home
[ ] Other (please state: _____)

5a. Have you ever taken other classes at LCC?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

b. If "yes" are you currently enrolled in another LCC class?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

COURSE DELIVERY INFORMATION

1a. While you were enrolled in the course, did you have any direct contact with the instructor?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

b. If "yes" what kind of contact did you have? (Check all that are appropriate)

[ ] Telephone
[ ] Class/seminar meetings
[ ] Office visits
[ ] Other (please state: _____)

2. In general, how did you feel about the frequency and quality of contact with the instructor?

3a. Generally, the language and vocabulary in the programs were:

Too Simple		OK		Too Hard
1	2	3	4	5

b. Generally, the pace of the TV programs was:

Too Slow		OK		Too Fast
1	2	3	4	5

c. Generally, the music in the program was:

Pleasing		Not Noticeable		Distracting
1	2	3	4	5

d. In general, did the pictures help you understand the materials?

Very Helpful		Somewhat Helpful		Not Helpful
1	2	3	4	5

e. If this course had only still pictures, how did you feel about the fact that the television program contained no moving pictures? (Check only one response)

[ ] Made no difference to me
[ ] Motion would have been nice, but it's not really needed
[ ] Motion is needed
[ ] Not applicable (this course had motion pictures)

4a. Would you prefer additional options for grading (such as, more essay questions, short answer questions, term papers, book reports, other outside investigative assignments?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

b. If so, what would you like?

5a. Did you ever watch a module more than once?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

(If "no" go to the Course Materials section.)

b. If "yes" which one(s) did you watch more than one time?

c. Why did you decide to see the module(s) again? (Please check all answers that apply)

[ ] I was interrupted and missed some of the module.
[ ] I didn't understand part of the module.
[ ] The module contained too much information, so that I couldn't get it all the first time.
[ ] The pace was too fast, so I missed some of the information.
[ ] I liked it and wanted to see it again.
[ ] Other (please state: _____)

COURSE MATERIAL INFORMATION

1a. Did you generally use any study materials while watching the program?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

b. If "yes" how easy was it to complete them while viewing the program?

Easy		OK		Difficult
1	2	3	4	5

2a. Did you use the "after watching" activities?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

b. If "yes," how helpful were they to your learning?

Very Helpful		Some Helpful		Not Helpful
1	2	3	4	5

3. As a study tool, how do you rate the videotext for the TV course?

Excellent		Average		Poor
1	2	3	4	5

4. How could the videotext be improved?

GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

1. How valuable is the information that you learned in this course?

Very Valuable		Average		Little Value
1	2	3	4	5

2a. Did you ever consider dropping this course?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

b. If "yes" what would have been your major reason for dropping it? (Check only one response)

[ ] Too hard to keep up with viewing the program
[ ] Lack of interest
[ ] Too hard to keep up with assignments
[ ] Personal reasons (e.g., illness, job, home responsibilities)
[ ] Other (please state: _____)

3. In general, where did you watch this course?

[ ] At home
[ ] At LCC
[ ] On the LCC bus
[ ] Other (please state: _____)

4a. Compared to "on-campus" courses, a TV course generally is:

Better		Same		Worse
1	2	3	4	5

b. Please explain your response.

5a. What did you particularly like about this TV course?

b. What did you dislike?

6. How can this TV course be improved?

GENERAL TV COURSE INFORMATION

1a. Would you recommend a TV course to a friend?

[ ] Yes [ ] No [ ] Uncertain

b. Please explain your response.

2. We are hoping to expand our broadcast schedule in the future. If this is possible, when would you prefer to view a television course? Please state your first, second, and third choices for the day of the week and the time of day.

	Day	Time
1st Choice	_____	_____
2nd Choice	_____	_____
3rd Choice	_____	_____

3. Please provide any additional comments or suggestions which would help us improve our TV offerings.

OPTIONAL INFORMATION

You do not need to answer these questions. However, your responses will help us to better serve the students who enroll in TV courses.

A. What is your sex?

[ ] Female
[ ] Male

B. What is your age?

[ ] Under 16
[ ] 16-23
[ ] 24-30
[ ] 31-39
[ ] 40-49
[ ] 50 or over

C. What is your current employment status? (Check all answers that apply to you.)

[ ] Full-time homemaker
[ ] Full-time employed
[ ] Part-time employed
[ ] Full-time student
[ ] Part-time student
[ ] Other (please state: _____)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND ASSISTANCE!

ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges
96 Powell Library Building
University of California
Los Angeles, California 90024

Lane Community College
Fall 1980

AUG 14 1981